

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### HONORING FT. LEWIS COLLEGE GRADUATES

#### HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Ft. Lewis College's Winter Graduating Class of 2004. I was unable to attend the ceremony and would like to enter some remarks into the record on behalf of the graduates.

I was asked to serve as the commencement speaker for the December 18th graduation ceremony in Durango, Colorado where Ft. Lewis College is located. Ft. Lewis College is a fine institution of higher learning in the West, and Durango happens to be one of my favorite places in Colorado. For my colleagues who have not had the opportunity to visit Durango, I can tell you that it embodies much of the majesty of the Rocky Mountains and the West. From the high country lakes to the red-rocked canyon lands to the breathtakingly rugged San Juan Mountains, Durango is truly awe-inspiring nature at its finest. I was very much looking forward to talking to these graduates in this beautiful part of our State.

Drawing on my experience as a climber and outdoorsman, I was going to talk to the graduates about the lessons they could learn from the natural world around them as they embarked upon their next journey. I hoped to remind them that they are surrounded by beauty and should take time to take note of the quality of air and light around them. Much like being atop our San Juan Mountains, they too were on the roof of the world. Not only can they look down with a sense of pride from the peak they have just climbed in earning their degree. From this new found height they can see the myriad peaks on the horizon for the first time because they have worked hard to better themselves through education. They can now see the boundless opportunities available to them. Among these opportunities are those involving public service.

A friend and man I admire, Senator JOHN MCCAIN, has said that military service gave him an opportunity to serve a cause bigger than personal self-interest. I could not say it any better, and I hope all graduates take this underlying message to heart whether they enter military service or not. Senator MCCAIN's wisdom speaks to all of us.

I want to take this opportunity to recognize their hard work and the support of their families and congratulate them on their graduation. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Ft. Lewis College Winter Graduating Class of 2004. I know I join their friends and family in taking great pride in this laudable achievement.

### IN RECOGNITION OF JONATHAN DEAN SISTO UPON HIS ACHIEVEMENT OF EAGLE SCOUT COURT OF HONOR

#### HON. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my constituent Jonathan Dean Sisto of Eagle Scout troop #204 in Lafayette, California, as he receives the distinguished honor of the Eagle Scout rank.

The honor of Eagle Scout is given only to those young men who have demonstrated that they have fulfilled its rigorous requirements, including living by the Scout Oath and Law, rising through the Boy Scout ranks, earning 21 merit badges, serving as a leader, and planning and leading a service project for their community. This is not an honor given out lightly: this young man is becoming an Eagle Scout because he is intelligent, dedicated, and principled.

I am proud to call Jonathan Dean Sisto my constituent, for he is a shining example of the promise of the next generation. Indeed, he represents the best of the young people in our country. I extend my sincere congratulations to him and his family, on this momentous occasion.

### SENIORS' HEALTH CARE FREEDOM ACT

#### HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Seniors' Health Care Freedom Act. This act protects seniors' fundamental right to make their own health care decisions by repealing federal laws that interfere with seniors' ability to form private contracts for medical services. This bill also repeals laws which force seniors into the Medicare program against their will. When Medicare was first established, seniors were promised that the program would be voluntary. In fact, the original Medicare legislation explicitly protected a senior's right to seek out other forms of medical insurance. However, the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 prohibits any physician who forms a private contract with a senior from filing any Medicare reimbursement claims for two years. As a practical matter, this means that seniors cannot form private contracts for health care services.

Seniors may wish to use their own resources to pay for procedures or treatments not covered by Medicare, or to simply avoid the bureaucracy and uncertainty that comes when seniors must wait for the judgment of a Center from Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) bureaucrat before finding out if a desired treatment is covered.

Seniors' right to control their own health care is also being denied due to the Social Security Administration's refusal to give seniors who object to enrolling for Medicare Part A Social Security benefits. This not only distorts the intent of the creators of the Medicare system; it also violates the promise represented by Social Security. Americans pay taxes into the Social Security Trust Fund their whole working lives and are promised that Social Security will be there for them when they retire. Yet, today, seniors are told that they cannot receive these benefits unless they agree to join an additional government program!

At a time when the fiscal solvency of Medicare is questionable, to say the least, it seems foolish to waste scarce Medicare funds on those who would prefer to do without Medicare. Allowing seniors who neither want nor need to participate in the program to refrain from doing so will also strengthen the Medicare program for those seniors who do wish to participate in it. Of course, my bill does not take away Medicare benefits from any senior. It simply allows each senior to choose voluntarily whether or not to accept Medicare benefits or to use his own resources to obtain health care.

Forcing seniors into government programs and restricting their ability to seek medical care free from government interference infringes on the freedom of seniors to control their own resources and make their own health care decisions. A woman who was forced into Medicare against her wishes summed it up best in a letter to my office, "... I should be able to choose the medical arrangements I prefer without suffering the penalty that is being imposed." I urge my colleagues to protect the right of seniors to make the medical arrangements that best suit their own needs by cosponsoring the Seniors' Health Care Freedom Act.

### TRIBUTE TO ATTORNEY JERRY MILANO

#### HON. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, Jerry Milano was one of Cleveland's most aggressive, flamboyant and skilled defense lawyers. He was equally respected by veteran trial lawyers and the young lawyers, who were "just learning the ropes." Attorney Kenneth Seminatore remembers being "educated" by the seasoned trial lawyer Milano.

"I learned a great deal about attitude and technique from him. In the courtroom, Milano was magic. He never used notes when talking to the jury. He had an uncanny ability to focus on the facts that were important, that would persuade a jury, and which appeared to be coming from his heart, not a script."

Seven years ago Milano's friends in the Cuyahoga County Defense Lawyers Association honored him with its Lifetime Achievement

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